

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 00059 041814Z
ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9150
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UNCLAS LONDON 00059

DEA FOR ENOM STRICKLER AND EN TRALY
PARIS FOR DEA

E.O.11652: N/A
SUBJECT: NARCOTICS: DEA ACTIVITIES IN UK CITED IN
SUNDAY TIMES ARTICLE

1. ON JANUARY 2 SUNDAY TIMES PUBLISHED ARTICLE BY PETER
WATSON AND DANAH ZOHAR ENTITLED "SECRETS OF SOHO'S HEROIN
HOODS." ARTICLE DEALS PRIMARILY WITH SUNDAY TIMES INVE-
STIGATION INTO HEROIN TRAFFICKING WITHIN AND BY MEMBERS OF
LONDON'S CHINESE COMMUNITY. END OF ARTICLE CONTAINS,
HOWEVER, SEVERAL TOTALLY UNRELATED REFERENCES TO DEA
ACTIVITIES IN BRITAIN.

2. PARTICULARLY MISLEADING IS FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH TAKEN
FROM HEADLINE LEAD-IN TO ARTICLE: "HEROIN IS NOW SUCH
BIG, ORGANIZED BUSINESS HERE THAT BRITAIN MAY HAVE BECOME
A TRANSHIPMENT POST FOR THE MUCH BIGGER PROFITS AVAILABLE
IN NORTH AMERICA. THAT IS WHY, AS THIS REPORT ALSO RE-
VEALS, THE UNITED STATES DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY IS
SETTING UP ITS OWN NETWORK OF INFORMERS IN BRITAIN, USING
AMERICAN CASH TO BUY INFORMATION."

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3. IN ADDITION, FOLLOWING HEADLINE IS USED AS SPACER
TOWARD END OF ARTICLE: "HOW AMERICAN NARCOTICS AGENTS
GET TO GRIPS WITH TOP MEN IN THE SYNDICATES." PORTION
OF ARTICLE CONTAINING REFERENCES TO DEA FOLLOWS:

"DESPITE AN INCREASE IN THE AMOUNT OF HEROIN AVAIL-
ABLE AND THE NUMBER OF ADDICTS IN BRITAIN, HOME OFFICE

STATISTICS MAINTAIN THAT THERE IS NO HEROIN PROBLEM HERE. THE DRUG SQUAD AND THE DRUGS UNIT OF THE CUSTOMS AND EXCISE INVESTIGATION DEPARTMENT THINK OTHERWISE. THEY ARE SUPPORTED BY THE U.S. DRUGS ENFORCEMENT AGENCY, WHICH RECENTLY MOVED A SECOND AGENT INTO BRITAIN.

"THOUGH BOTH SCOTLAND YARD AND THE DRUGS AGENCY INSIST THAT THE SECOND MAN ARRIVED WITHIN THE PAST MONTH, SUNDAY TIMES INQUIRIES BY PETER PRINGLE IN NEW YORK INDICATE THAT HE HAS IN FACT BEEN HERE SINCE LAST JULY. A GREAT DEAL OF MYSTERY SURROUNDS HIS PRESENCE AND FUNCTION IN BRITAIN, AND RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE AGENCY'S OPERATIONS HERE.

"CERTAIN OFFICIALS WITHIN THE GOVERNMENT AND AMONG POLICE HAVE INDICATED TO US THAT THE DRUGS AGENCY IS NOW SO CONCERNED ABOUT BRITAIN'S DRUG PROBLEM (AND ITS CONSEQUENT IMPLICATIONS FOR AMERICA) THAT IT IS ACTUALLY PAYING LOCAL INFORMANTS TO HELP TO GATHER INFORMATION. THE YARD AND THE AGENCY DENY THAT ANY UNDERCOVER INTELLIGENCE OPERATION WOULD BE USED HERE, BUT IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT THE AGENCY DOES EMPLOY LOCAL INFORMANTS IN OTHER COUNTRIES, AND FREQUENTLY ACQUIRES LARGE QUANTITIES OF HEROIN TO BUY ITS WAY INTO THE TOP RANKS OF HEROIN SYNDICATES -- A METHOD STRICTLY FORBIDDEN TO BRITISH POLICE.

"YET THE PRESENCE IN BRITAIN OF THE AMERICAN AGENTS SUGGESTS THAT WE EITHER ARE, OR SOON COULD BE, AN IMPORTANT STAGING POST IN THE SHIPMENT OF HEROIN TO THE UNITED STATES. THEY ARE KNOWN TO HAVE THEIR EYES ON ONE OR TWO CHINESE WHO HAVE BUSINESSES IN LONDON WITH INTERNATIONAL LINKS BUT HAVE YET TO MAKE ANY REAL HEADWAY."

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4. IF ASKED TO COMMENT ON ARTICLE, EMBASSY PLANS TO RESPOND THAT: (A) THERE IS NO MYSTERY SURROUNDING THE OPERATIONS OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES IN LONDON. THEY ARE HERE TO LIAISE WITH BRITISH LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CUSTOMS OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH NARCOTICS MATTERS AND THESE OFFICIALS ARE FULLY AWARE OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE DEA REPRESENTATIVES; AND (B) THE DEA REPRESENTATIVES IN LONDON DO NOT ENGAGE IN ANY UNDERCOVER INTELLIGENCE GATHERING NOR DO THEY PAY LOCAL INFORMANTS TO GATHER INFORMATION. FYI: LATTER POINTS WERE STRESSED IN TWO INTERVIEWS BETWEEN WATSON AND ZOHAR AND DEA LONDON BEFORE PUBLICATION.

5. FULL ARTICLE FOLLOWS BY POUCH.

SPIERS

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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